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Back to school is good time for divorced parents to review arrangements, Birmingham attorney says

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As families prepare to send kids back to school, divorced parents would be wise to review schedules to determine if the current plan best fits their children's school-year needs.

That's according to Alisa Peskin-Shepherd, a Birmingham family law attorney.

"Just because you have a parenting time plan in place does not mean you can't tweak it as the children grow and their needs change," she says. "That's the mark of great co-parenting – being flexible enough to accommodate your children's needs from year to year."

A great way to determine what is best for your children as the school year approaches is to assess how the current parenting schedule worked for them last year, she notes.

If they're switching schools or moving up to middle school or high school, there may be new start and end times, new extracurricular activities and new homework demands which could call for a different overnight situation to guarantee your students' success.

"Parents need to talk to one another," says Peskin-Shepherd. "Just because your marriage ended doesn't mean your co-parenting ended. It never does! You always want to keep your eye on what is truly best for the kids."

While divorced parents may feel competitive with one another or protective of their time with their children, they need to consider switching things up if it's better for the kids. If one parent lives closer to a new school, consider arranging for the kids to stay with that parent on school nights, perhaps.

To make sure a parent doesn't lose out on time with their kids, the two of them can adjust after-school breaks or weekend time, or even holiday distribution, to even it out, Peskin-Shepherd advises.

Another thing Peskin-Shepherd suggests: When children get old enough, include them in the conversation about where they'd like to be during school nights.

Peskin-Shepherd has more than 25 years of experience as a family, divorce and custody attorney. She founded Transitions Legal, 280 N. Old Woodward Ave., in 2013.

To learn more, visit www.transitionslegal.com or call 248-290-0560.